

Immunization Registry Progress in Delaware

Note: Unless otherwise stated, the information in this fact sheet was obtained from data and information submitted by the program manager or representative from the immunization program in Delaware.

Immunization Coverage in Delaware

According to National Immunization Survey (NIS) data for July 1997 to June 1998, the percentage of children 19-35 months of age who were up-to-date with 4 doses of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, 3 doses of poliomyelitis, and 1 dose of measles, mumps, rubella vaccine was 83%.

Facts about VACAttack

- VACAttack collects and manages immunization data for the entire state of Delaware.
- The targeted age group for VACAttack is from birth to 18 years of age.
- Currently, there are no outside linkages with the registry.
- As of June 21, 1999:
 - 92% of children less than 6 years old were enrolled in the registry; and
 - 46% of all providers were enrolled in the registry.

Other unique qualities about VACAttack

Immunization data from the registry is transferred electronically to Electronic Data Systems (EDS), the State of Delaware's Medicaid fiscal agent. This allows EDS to pay providers to immunize patients enrolled in the State's Vaccines for Children (VFC) program.

The electronic transfer process has enabled the creation of a Turn Around Document (TAD) for providers. After an immunization is entered into the registry and electronically transferred, EDS replicates an updated immunization record and "turns it around" to the immunizing provider. The TAD can be used by the provider to make corrections or changes to the registry's record of immunization, thereby improving the quality of the registry data. It also reduces the provider's time by giving his office an updated form documenting the child's immunization history. Currently, the TAD is being generated on VFC eligible children only; however a process is being developed to include all vaccine doses reported to the registry for all children.

Other registry plans, accomplishments, and successes

Future enhancements that VACAttack would like to implement include:

- 24 hour provider access to registry data;
- On-line access by emergency rooms;
- Letter writing capability (reminder/recall);
- Linkages with the Newborn Screening Program and Vital Statistic Records to assure that every child born in Delaware is in the registry;
- Provision of on-line support for outside agencies and private providers ; and
- Internet access with appropriate confidentiality safeguards.

The maintenance of a registry is an on-going, evolutionary process. New vaccine products, complex immunization recommendations, a changing health care system, and evolving information technology result in the need for a sustained and significant effort to maintain an immunization registry. The usefulness of the registry is only as good as the data it contains. Greater provider participation will allow the registry to become a statewide source for:

- Connecting providers and patients to immunization histories;
- Assessing immunization completion rates;
- Identifying pockets of need;
- Implementing systems to remind patients that an immunization is due; and
- Improving disease surveillance.

Some challenges and barriers affecting registry progress

- Recruiting providers to participate in the registry
- Finding ways to enhance the value the registry provides to both providers and patients
- Improving the completeness and accuracy of data in the registry
- Using registry information to identify pockets of need
- Clarifying authority to release information in the registry to our partners with a need to know

Current political or legislative factors affecting registry activity

The Division of Public Health has drafted regulations that both would improve participation in the registry by providers, and clarify the agency's authority to release information in the registry to partners with a legitimate need to know. We anticipate public comment on the proposed regulations some time in May or early June 1999.

Helpful immunization and immunization registry contacts in Delaware

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